Understandings

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Understandings

by StratsWrote

Summary

“How long have you known?” Hannibal asked. He sat at the head of the table, so close that Will could have reached out and touched him.

Will swirled his wine in his glass, thoughtful. “I could smell it on you,” he said.

Hannibal raised an eyebrow. “I had thought I’d been thorough in my cleanup.”

“You were,” Will said. He smiled wide enough to show a flash of fang. “That isn’t enough with me.”

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

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“Ah,” Hannibal said. “Of course. Does Jack know?”

“I am legally obligated to inform my employer of my life status.”

Hannibal mulled that over, taking in Will’s precise wording. “He doesn’t, then.”

Will leaned back in his chair. “He suspects. I’m always more irritable in the sunlight, after all, no matter how much sunblock I layer on.”

“It’s come a long way since my childhood,” Hannibal mused. “There was a vampire who lived on the edge of the village who couldn’t go outside at all if the sun was out.”

“Or he didn’t dare,” Will pointed out. “A couple of decades ago, we had only just been outed to the public. The laws were still unsure of what to do with us. He may have found it safer to avoid the crowds.”

“Perhaps.” Hannibal took another sip of his wine. His eyes didn’t leave Will’s face, his attention rapt. “When were you born, Will?”

“You’ll laugh.”

“Try me.”

“1970,” Will said.

Hannibal looked surprised. “I’m still older than you.”

Will grinned. “I was bitten when I was 28. I’ve only been undead for a little over 20 years.”

“You’ve adapted well, considering.”

“By the time I was changed, laws were already being written. My sire was the first to serve time for what they were then calling fourth degree murder.”

“A murder that results in a resurrection.”

“Nowadays I think the kids call it vamping.” Will rolled his eyes. Because of population issues, it was technically illegal, but Will’s sire had been released a year earlier. Will had called out of work and sat at home being *resentful*.

“Did it hurt?” Hannibal’s curiosity was a palpable thing, a focus that Will was unused to having centered on him. He liked it. He liked the way Hannibal had forgotten his meal halfway through, too busy listening to Will.

“He murdered me,” Will reminded him. “How do your victims feel when you kill them?”

“I imagine they aren’t too fond of me.”

Will licked his lips. “It hurts like a son-of-a-bitch,” he said quietly. “Not at first. The bite feels like nothing you’ve ever experienced. Euphoria. But once the blood is gone, once death comes to call, that’s when everything begins to burn.”

“Have you ever?”

Will laughed. “I’m surprised at you, Doctor Lecter. You know we’re meant to get our food from the blood banks.”

Hannibal tilted his head. His expression was ravenous. “I’ll show you mine if you’ll show me yours.”

“Hard to do. They’ve never found any of mine.”

Hannibal drew in a breath, just a quick little inhale, but Will caught it and held it in his mind. He tucked that memory away, for later.

Hannibal rose from the table, holding out a hand for Will. “I suppose we should start with mine, then.”

Will let Hannibal lace their fingers together, following him towards the pantry. “Tell me, Doctor Lecter. Have you ever donated?”

End Notes

Technically speaking there isn't really a 'third degree' murder, after 1st and 2nd degree comes voluntary or involuntary manslaughter. But manslaughter is sometimes colloquially referred to as '3rd degree murder' so when they were making laws for vampires the slang term for siring was '4th degree murder.' Because I think I'm clever.

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